

Message Text

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FM AMEMBASSY BEIRUT

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C O N F I D E N T I A L BEIRUT 3657

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PASS TO SECRETARY IN LONDON

E.O.11652: GDS

TAGS: PINS, LE

SUBJ: FRANGIE ADVISER DAHDAH'S TRIP TO DAMASCUS

1. DURING AMBASSADOR BROWN'S MEETING WITH FRANGIE, LATTER'S ADVISER LUCIEN DAHDAH FILLED ME IN ON HIS TRIP TO DAMASCUS, FROM WHICH HE HAD JUST RETURNED.

2. STATED CHRISTIANS HAD MANY APPREHENSIONS WHEN THE LEARNED OF ARAFAT'S TRIP TO SEE ASAD. MATTERS AGGRAVATED BY FACT THAT LINES TO DAMASCUS WERE CUT FOR THREE DAYS FOLLOWING ARAFAT'S VISIT. WAS NOT KNOWN WHETHER THIS HAD BEEN DONE DELIBERATELY AND THOUGHT AROSE THAT EVEN THE SYRIANS WERE RESPONSIBLE. AS MATTERS TURNED OUT, THE SYRIANS ALLEGEDLY WERE NOT EVEN AWARE OF THIS SITUATION.

3. DAHDAHSSAID THAT HE WAS NOT COMPLETELY SATISFIED WITH THE ASSURANCES HE RECEIVED IN DAMASCUS REGARDING THE CAIRO AGREEMENT AND WHAT HAD BEEN AGREED UPON LAST JANUARY. SECURITY WAS AN ESSENTIAL FACTOR WITH RESPECT TO THE POLITICAL EVOLUTION OF THE LEBANESE SITUATION. SYRIA ALONE SEEMED TO BE CAPABLE OF PROVIDING ADEQUATE SECURITY. YET THEY WERE PREVENTED FROM DOING SO AND WERE FORCED TO MAKE WHAT SEEMED TO BE A NOT TOO SATISFACTORY ARRANGEMENT WITH THE PALESTINIANS. IT WAS DIFFICULT TO SEE HOW

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THE CAIRO AGREEMENT COULD BE RESPECTED WHILE THE

PALESTINIANS AT THE SAME TIME PLAYED A ROLE IN INTERNAL
LEBANESE SECURITY.

4. DAHDAH CLAIMED THAT THE SYRIANS WANTED TO PLAY A
DIRECT ROLE IN LEBANESE SECURITY . ALLEGEDLY THE
SYRIANS ARE ANNOYED WITH THE U.S. FOR NOT MAKING
THIS POSSIBLE. MOREOVER, THE SYRIANS ARE PUZZLED BY
WHAT THEY CONSIDER CONTRADICTORY STATEMENTS COMING
FROM U.S. SPOKESMEN IN WASHINGTON. IF THE UNITED
STATES WANTED TO, THE SYRIANS REPORTEDLY CLAIM, IT
COULD MAKE THE NECESSARY ARRANGEMENTS WITH ISRAEL
TO ALLOW THIS TO TAKE PLACE.

5. FOR AHAT IT IS WORTH, DAHDAH MAINTAINS THAT THE
SYRIANS WOULD BE RECEPTIVE TO RESPONDING FAVORABLY
TO A PROPOSAL FROM THE NEW LEBANESE PRESIDENT,
CALLING FOR A CONSORTIUM FOR RECONSTRUCTION. WHILE
VARIOUS ASPECTS OF RECONSTRUCTION COULD BE DELEGATED
TO DIFFERENT COUNTRIES, HOWEVER, THE SYRIANS HAVE
MADE IT CLEAR THAT THEY SHOULD HAVE THE JOB, PROBABLY
ALONE, OF REESTABLISHING SECURITY. IN FULFILLING THIS
JOB, ACCORDING TO DAHDAH, THE SYRIANS WOULD BE INTERESTED
IN TRYING TO GET SOME SORT OF AGREEMENT WITH THE UNITED
STATES THAT WOULD ENABLE THEM TO DO THE JOB ADEQUATELY.
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